IN THE CLAIMS:

Replace claim 1 with:

1. (amended) A single crystal silicon segment having two major, generally parallel surfaces, one of which is the front surface of the segment and the other of which is the back surface of the segment, a central plane between the front and back surfaces, a circumferential edge joining the front and back surfaces, a surface layer which comprises a first region of the segment below the front surface and a distance, D_1, as measured from the front surface and toward the central plane, and a bulk layer which comprises a second region of the segment between the central plane and the first region, the segment being characterized in that

the segment has a non-uniform distribution of minority carrier recombination centers, with the concentration of the centers in the bulk layer being greater than the concentration in the surface layer and with the centers having a concentration profile in which the peak density of the centers is at or near the central plane with the concentration generally decreasing from the position of peak density in the direction of the front surface of the segment.